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THE

LOVES OF THE ANGELS.

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THE

LOVES OF THE ANGELS,

A Poem.

By THOMAS MOORE.

It happened, after the sons of men had multiplied in those days, that daughters were born to them elegant and beautiful; and when the Angels, the sons of heaven, beheld them, they became enamoured of them.

The Book of Enoch, chap. vii. sect. 2.

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PREFACE.

THIS Poem, somewhat different in form, and much more limited in extent, was originally designed as an episode for a work, about which I have been, at intervals, employed during the last two years. Some months since, however, I found that my friend Lord Byron had, by an accidental coincidence, chosen the same subject for a Drama; and, as I could not but feel the disadvantage of coming after so formidable a rival, I thought it best to publish my humble sketch immediately, with such

alterations and additions as I had time to make, and thus, by an earlier appearance in the literary horizon, give myself the chance of what astronomers call an *Heliacal rising*, before the luminary, in whose light I was to be lost, should appear.

As objections may be made, by persons whose opinions I respect, to the selection of a subject of this nature from the Scripture, I think it right to remark, that, in point of fact, the subject is *not* scriptural — the notion upon which it is founded (that of the love of Angels for women) having originated in an erroneous translation by the LXX. of that verse in

the sixth chapter of Genesis, upon which the sole authority for the fable rests.* The foundation of my story, therefore, has as little to do with Holy Writ as have the dreams of the later Platonists, or the reveries of the Jewish divines; and, in appropriating the notion thus to the uses of poetry, I have done no more than establish it in that region of fiction, to which the opinions of the most rational Fathers, and of all other Christian theologians, have long ago consigned it.

In addition to the fitness of the subject for poetry, it struck me also as capable of affording an allegorical medium, through

* See Note.

which might be shadowed out (as I have endeavoured to do in the following stories,) the fall of the Soul from its original purity—the loss of light and happiness which it suffers, in the pursuit of this world's perishable pleasures—and the punishments, both from conscience and Divine justice, with which impurity, pride, and presumptuous inquiry into the awful secrets of God, are sure to be visited. The beautiful story of Cupid and Psyche owes its chief charm to this sort of "veiled meaning," and it has been my wish (however I may have failed in the attempt) to communicate the same *moral* interest to the following pages.

THE

LOVES OF THE ANGELS.

'Twas when the world was in its prime,
When the fresh stars had just begun
Their race of glory, and young Time
Told his first birth-days by the sun;
When, in the light of Nature's dawn
Rejoicing, men and angels met
On the high hill and sunny lawn, —
Ere sorrow came, or Sin had drawn
'Twixt man and heaven her curtain yet!

When earth lay nearer to the skies
Than in these days of crime and woe,
And mortals saw, without surprise,
In the mid-air, angelic eyes
Gazing upon this world below.

Alas, that Passion should profane,
Ev'n then, that morning of the earth!
That, sadder still, the fatal stain
Should fall on hearts of heavenly birth—
And oh, that stain so dark should fall
From Woman's love, most sad of all!

One evening, in that time of bloom,
On a hill's side, where hung the ray
Of sunset, sleeping in perfume,
Three noble youths conversing lay;

And, as they look'd, from time to time,
To the far sky, where Daylight furl'd
His radiant wing, their brows sublime
Bespoke them of that distant world—
Creatures of light, such as still play,
Like motes in sunshine, round the Lord,
And through their infinite array
Transmit each moment, night and day,
The echo of His luminous word!

Of Heaven they spoke, and, still more oft,
Of the bright eyes that charm'd them thence;
Till, yielding gradual to the soft
And balmy evening's influence—
The silent breathing of the flowers—
The melting light that beam'd above,
As on their first, fond, erring hours,
Each told the story of his love,

The history of that hour unblest,
When, like a bird, from its high nest
Won down by fascinating eyes,
For Woman's smile he lost the skies.

The First who spoke was one, with look
The least celestial of the three —
A Spirit of light mould, that took
The prints of earth most yieldingly:
Who, ev'n in heaven, was not of those
Nearest the Throne, but held a place
Far off, among those shining rows
That circle out through endless space,
And o'er whose wings the light from Him
In the great centre falls most dim.

Still fair and glorious, he but shone
Among those youths th' unheavenliest one —

A creature, to whom light remain'd
From Eden still, but alter'd, stain'd,
And o'er whose brow not Love alone
A blight had, in his transit, sent,
But other, earthlier joys had gone,
And left their foot-prints as they went.

Sighing, as through the shadowy Past
Like a tomb-searcher, Memory ran,
Lifting each shroud that Time had cast
O'er buried hopes, he thus began:—

FIRST ANGEL'S STORY.

'Twas in a land, that far away
Into the golden orient lies,
Where Nature knows not night's delay,
But springs to meet her bridegroom, Day,
Upon the threshold of the skies.
One morn, on earthly mission sent,
And mid-way choosing where to light,
I saw, from the blue element—
Oh beautiful, but fatal sight!—
One of earth's fairest womankind,
Half veil'd from view, or rather shrin'd
In the clear crystal of a brook;
Which, while it hid no single gleam

Of her young beauties, made them look
More spirit-like, as they might seem
Through the dim shadowing of a dream.

Pausing in wonder I look'd on,
While, playfully around her breaking
The waters, that like diamonds shone,
She mov'd in light of her own making.
At length, as slowly I descended
To view more near a sight so splendid,
The tremble of my wings all o'er
(For through each plume I felt the thrill)
Startled her, as she reach'd the shore
Of that small lake — her mirror still —
Above whose brink she stood, like snow
When rosy with a sunset glow.
Never shall I forget those eyes! —
The shame, the innocent surprise

Of that bright face, when in the air
Uplooking, she beheld me there.
It seem'd as if each thought, and look,
And motion were that minute chain'd
Fast to the spot, such root she took,
And — like a sunflower by a brook,
With face upturn'd — so still remain'd!

In pity to the wondering maid,
Though loth from such a vision turning,
Downward I bent, beneath the shade
Of my spread wings to hide the burning
Of glances, which — I well could feel —
For me, for her, too warmly shone;
But, ere I could again unseal
My restless eyes, or even steal
One side-long look, the maid was gone —

Hid from me in the forest leaves,
Sŭdden as when, in all her charms
Of full-blown light, some cloud receives
The Moon into his dusky arms.

'Tis not in words to tell the power,
The despotism that, from that hour,
Passion held o'er me—day and night
I sought around each neighbouring spot,
And, in the chase of this sweet light,
My task, and heaven, and all forgot—
All, but the one, sole, haunting dream
Of her I saw in that bright stream.

Nor was it long, ere by her side
I found myself, whole happy days,
Listening to words, whose music vied
With our own Eden's seraph lays,

When seraph lays are warm'd by love,
But, wanting *that*, far, far above!—
And looking into eyes where, blue
And beautiful, like skies seen through
The sleeping wave, for me there shone
A heaven, more worshipp'd than my own.
Oh what, while I could hear and see
Such words and looks, was heaven to me?
Though gross the air on earth I drew,
'Twas blessed, while she breath'd it too;
Though dark the flowers, though dim the sky,
Love lent them light, while she was nigh.
Throughout creation I but knew
Two separate worlds—the *one*, that small,
Belov'd, and consecrated spot
Where LEA *was*—the other, all
The dull, wide waste, where she was *not!*

But vain my suit, my madness vain;
Though gladly, from her eyes to gain
One earthly look, one stray desire,
I would have torn the wings, that hung
Furl'd at my back, and o'er that Fire
Unnam'd in heaven their fragments flung;
'Twas hopeless all — pure and unmov'd
She stood, as lilies in the light
Of the hot noon but look more white; —
And though she lov'd me, deeply lov'd,
'Twas not as man, as mortal — no,
Nothing of earth was in that glow —
She lov'd me but as one, of race
Angelic, from that radiant place
She saw so oft in dreams — that Heaven,
To which her prayers at morn were sent,
And on whose light she gaz'd at even,

Wishing for wings, that she might go
Out of this shadowy world below,
To that free, glorious element!

Well I remember by her side
Sitting at rosy even-tide,
When, — turning to the star, whose head
Look'd out, as from a bridal bed,
At that mute, blushing hour, — she said,
" Oh! that it were my doom to be
" The Spirit of yon beauteous star,
" Dwelling up there in purity,
" Alone, as all such bright things are; —
" My sole employ to pray and shine,
" To light my censer at the sun,
" And fling its fire towards the shrine
" Of Him in heaven, the Eternal One!"

So innocent the maid — so free
From mortal taint in soul and frame,
Whom 'twas my crime — my destiny —
To love, aye, burn for, with a flame,
To which earth's wildest fires are tame.
Had you but seen her look, when first
From my mad lips the' avowal burst;
Not angry, — no — the feeling had
No touch of anger, but most sad —
It was a sorrow, calm as deep,
A mournfulness that could not weep,
So fill'd the heart was to the brink,
So fix'd and frozen there — to think
That angel natures — even I,
Whose love she clung to, as the tie
Between her spirit and the sky —
Should fall thus headlong from the height
Of such pure glory into sin —

The sin, of all, most sure to blight,
The sin, of all, that the soul's light
Is soonest lost, extinguish'd in!
That, though but frail and human, she
Should, like the half-bird of the sea,
Try with her wing sublimer air,
While I, a creature born up there,
Should meet her, in my fall from light,
From heaven and peace, and turn her flight
Downward again, with me to drink
Of the salt tide of sin, and sink!

That very night—my heart had grown
Impatient of its inward burning;
The term, too, of my stay was flown,
And the bright Watchers* near the throne,

* See Note.

Already, if a meteor shone
Between them and this nether zone,
Thought 'twas their herald's wing returning;—
Oft did the potent spell-word, given
To Envoys hither from the skies,
To be pronounc'd, when back to heaven
It is their hour or wish to rise,
Come to my lips that fatal day;
And once, too, was so nearly spoken,
That my spread plumage in the ray
And breeze of heaven began to play—
When my heart fail'd—the spell was broken—
The word unfinish'd died away,
And my check'd plumes, ready to soar,
Fell slack and lifeless as before.

How could I leave a world, which she,
Or lost or won, made all to me,

Beyond home—glory—every thing?
How fly, while yet there was a chance,
A hope—aye, even of perishing
Utterly by that fatal glance!
No matter where my wanderings were,
So there she look'd, mov'd, breath'd about—
Woe, ruin, death, more sweet with her,
Than all heaven's proudest joys without!

But, to return—that very day
A feast was held, where, full of mirth,
Came, crowding thick as flowers that play
In summer winds, the young and gay
And beautiful of this bright earth.
And she was there, and 'mid the young
And beautiful stood first, alone;
Though on her gentle brow still hung
The shadow I that morn had thrown—

The first, that ever shame or woe
Had cast upon its vernal snow.
My heart was madden'd—in the flush
Of the wild revel I gave way
To all that frantic mirth—that rush
Of desperate gaiety, which they,
Who never felt how pain's excess
Can break out thus, think happiness—
Sad mimicry of mirth and life,
Whose flashes come but from the strife
Of inward passions—like the light
Struck out by clashing swords in fight.

Then, too, that juice of earth, the bane
And blessing of man's heart and brain—
That draught of sorcery, which brings
Phantoms of fair, forbidden things—

Whose drops, like those of rainbows, smile
Upon the mists that circle man,
Bright'ning not only Earth, the while,
But grasping Heaven, too, in their span!—
Then first the fatal wine-cup rain'd
Its dews of darkness through my lips,
Casting whate'er of light remain'd
To my lost soul into eclipse,
And filling it with such wild dreams,
Such fantasies and wrong desires,
As, in the absence of heaven's beams,
Haunt us for ever—like wild-fires
That walk this earth, when day retires.

Now hear the rest—our banquet done,
I sought her, in the' accustom'd bower,
Where late we oft, when day was gone,
And the world hush'd, had met alone,
At the same silent, moonlight hour.

I found her—oh, so beautiful!
Why, why have hapless Angels eyes?
Or why are there not flowers to cull,
As fair as Woman, in yon skies?
Still did her brow, as usual, turn
To her lov'd star, which seem'd to burn
Purer than ever on that night;
While she, in looking, grew more bright,
As though that planet were an urn
From which her eyes drank liquid light.

There was a virtue in that scene,
A spell of holiness around,
Which would have—had my brain not been
Thus poison'd, madden'd—held me bound,
As though I stood on God's own ground.
Ev'n as it was, with soul all flame,
And lips that burn'd in their own sighs,

I stood to gaze, with awe and shame—
The memory of Eden came
Full o'er me when I saw those eyes;
And tho' too well each glance of mine
To the pale, shrinking maiden prov'd
How far, alas, from aught divine,
Aught worthy of so pure a shrine,
Was the wild love with which I lov'd,
Yet must she, too, have seen — oh yes,
'Tis soothing but to *think* she saw —
The deep, true, soul-felt tenderness,
The homage of an Angel's awe
To her, a mortal, whom pure love
Then plac'd above him — far above —
And all that struggle to repress
A sinful spirit's mad excess,
Which work'd within me at that hour,
When — with a voice, where Passion shed

All the deep sadness of her power,
Her melancholy power — I said,
" Then be it so — if back to heaven
" I must unlov'd, unpitied fly,
" Without one blest memorial given
" To sooth me in that lonely sky —
" One look, like those the young and fond
" Give when they're parting — which would be,
" Ev'n in remembrance, far beyond
" All heaven hath left of bliss for me!

" Oh, but to see that head recline
" A minute on this trembling arm,
" And those mild eyes look up to mine
" Without a dread, a thought of harm!
" To meet but once the thrilling touch
" Of lips that are too fond to fear me —

" Or, if that boon be all too much,
" Ev'n thus to bring their fragrance near me!
" Nay, shrink not so—a look—a word—
" Give them but kindly and I fly;
" Already, see, my plumes have stirr'd,
" And tremble for their home on high.
" Thus be our parting—cheek to cheek—
" One minute's lapse will be forgiven,
" And thou, the next, shalt hear me speak
" The spell that plumes my wing for heaven!"

While thus I spoke, the fearful maid,
Of me, and of herself afraid,
Had shrinking stood, like flowers beneath
The scorching of the south-wind's breath:
But when I nam'd—alas, too well,
I now recall, though wilder'd then,—

Instantly, when I nam'd the spell,
Her brow, her eyes uprose again,
And, with an eagerness, that spoke
The sudden light that o'er her broke,
" The spell, the spell ! — oh, speak it now,
" And I will bless thee !" she exclaim'd —
Unknowing what I did, inflam'd,
And lost already, on her brow
I stamp'd one burning kiss, and nam'd
The mystic word, till then ne'er told
To living creature of earth's mould !
Scarce was it said, when, quick as thought,
Her lips from mine, like echo, caught
The holy sound — her hands and eyes
Were instant lifted to the skies,
And thrice to heaven she spoke it out
With that triumphant look Faith wears,
When not a cloud of fear or doubt,

A vapour from this vale of tears,
Between her and her God appears!
That very moment her whole frame
All bright and glorified became,
And at her back I saw unclose
Two wings, magnificent as those
That sparkle round the' Eternal Throne,
Whose plumes, as buoyantly she rose
Above me, in the moon-beam shone
With a pure light, which—from its hue,
Unknown upon this earth—I knew
Was light from Eden, glistening through!
Most holy vision! ne'er before
Did aught so radiant—since the day
When Lucifer, in falling, bore
The third of the bright stars away*—

* See Note.

Rise, in earth's beauty, to repair
That loss of light and glory there!

But did I tamely view her flight?
Did not *I*, too, proclaim out thrice
The powerful words that were, that night,—
Oh ev'n for heaven too much delight!—
Again to bring us, eyes to eyes,
And soul to soul, in Paradise?
I did—I spoke it o'er and o'er—
I pray'd, I wept, but all in vain;
For me the spell had power no more,
There seem'd around me some dark chain
Which still, as I essay'd to soar,
Baffled, alas, each wild endeavour:
Dead lay my wings, as they have lain
Since that sad hour, and will remain—
So wills the' offended God—for ever!

It was to yonder star I trac'd
Her journey up the' illumin'd waste—
That isle in the blue firmament,
To which so oft her fancy went
In wishes and in dreams before,
And which was now—such, Purity,
Thy blest reward—ordain'd to be
Her home of light for evermore!

Once—or did I but fancy so?—
Ev'n in her flight to that fair sphere,
Mid all her spirit's new-felt glow,
A pitying look she turn'd below
On him who stood in darkness here;
Him whom, perhaps, if vain regret
Can dwell in heaven, she pities yet;

And oft, when looking to this dim
And distant world, remembers him.

But soon that passing dream was gone;
Farther and farther off she shone,
Till lessen'd to a point, as small
As are those specks that yonder burn—
Those vivid drops of light, that fall
The last from day's exhausted urn.
And when at length she merg'd, afar,
Into her own immortal star,
And when at length my straining sight
Had caught her wing's last fading ray,
That minute from my soul the light
Of heaven and love both pass'd away;
And I forgot my home, my birth,
Profan'd my spirit, sunk my brow,

And revell'd in gross joys of earth,
Till I became—what I am now!"

The Spirit bow'd his head in shame;
A shame, that of itself would tell—
Were there not ev'n those breaks of flame,
Celestial, through his clouded frame—
How grand the height from which he fell!
That holy Shame, which ne'er forgets
What clear renown it us'd to wear;
Whose blush remains, when Virtue sets,
To show her sunshine *has* been there.

Once only, while the tale he told,
Were his eyes lifted to behold
That happy stainless star, where she
Dwelt in her bower of purity!

One minute did he look, and then—
As though he felt some deadly pain
From its sweet light through heart and brain—
Shrunk back, and never look'd again.

Who was the Second Spirit?—he
With the proud front and piercing glance —
Who seem'd, when viewing heaven's expanse,
As though his far-sent eye could see
On, on into the' Immensity
Behind the veils of that blue sky,
Where God's sublimest secrets lie?—
His wings, the while, though day was gone,
Flashing with many a various hue
Of light they from themselves alone,
Instinct with Eden's brightness, drew—

A breathing forth of beams at will,
Of living beams, which, though no more
They kept their early lustre, still
Were such, when glittering out all o'er,
As mortal eye-lids wink'd before.

'Twas Rubi—once among the prime
And flower of those bright creatures, nam'd
Spirits of Knowledge *, who o'er Time
And Space and Thought an empire claim'd,
Second alone to Him, whose light
Was, ev'n to theirs, as day to night—
'Twixt whom and them was distance far
And wide, as would the journey be
To reach from any island star
The vague shores of Infinity!

* The Cherubim. — See Note.

'Twas RUBI, in whose mournful eye
Slept the dim light of days gone by;
Whose voice, though sweet, fell on the ear
Like echoes, in some silent place,
When first awak'd for many a year;
And when he smil'd—if o'er his face
Smile ever shone—'twas like the grace
Of moonlight rainbows, fair, but wan,
The sunny life, the glory gone.
Ev'n o'er his pride, though still the same,
A softening shade from sorrow came;
And though at times his spirit knew
The kindlings of disdain and ire,
Short was the fitful glare they threw—
Like the last flashes, fierce but few,
Seen through some noble pile on fire!

Such was the Angel, who now broke
The silence that had come o'er all,
When he, the Spirit that last spoke,
Clos'd the sad history of his fall;
And, while a sacred lustre, flown
For many a day, relum'd his cheek,
And not those sky-tun'd lips alone
But his eyes, brow, and tresses, roll'd
Like sunset waves, all seem'd to speak—
Thus his eventful story told:—

SECOND ANGEL'S STORY.

" You both remember well the day
When unto Eden's new-made bowers,
He, whom all living things obey,
Summon'd his chief angelic powers
To witness the one wonder yet,
Beyond man, angel, star, or sun,
He must achieve, ere he could set
His seal upon the world, as done—
To see that last perfection rise,
That crowning of creation's birth,
When, mid the worship and surprise
Of circling angels, Woman's eyes
First open'd upon heaven and earth;

And from their lids a thrill was sent,
That through each living spirit went
Like first light through the firmament!

Can you forget how gradual stole
The fresh-awaken'd breath of soul
Throughout her perfect form — which seem'd
To grow transparent, as there beam'd
That dawn of Mind within, and caught
New loveliness from each new thought?
Slow as o'er summer seas we trace
The progress of the noontide air,
Dimpling its bright and silent face
Each minute into some new grace,
And varying heaven's reflections there —
Or, like the light of evening, stealing
O'er some fair temple, which all day

Hath slept in shadow, slow revealing
Its several beauties, ray by ray,
Till it shines out, a thing to bless,
All full of light and loveliness.

Can you forget her blush, when round
Through Eden's lone, enchanted ground
She look'd — and at the sea — the skies —
And heard the rush of many a wing,
By God's command then vanishing,
And saw the last few angel eyes,
Still lingering — mine among the rest, —
Reluctant leaving scene so blest?

From that miraculous hour, the fate
Of this new, glorious Being dwelt
For ever, with a spell-like weight,
Upon my spirit — early, late,

Whate'er I did, or dream'd, or felt,
The thought of what might yet befall
That splendid creature mix'd with all. —
Nor she alone, but her whole race
Through ages yet to come — whate'er
Of feminine, and fond, and fair,
Should spring from that pure mind and face,
All wak'd my soul's intensest care;
Their forms, souls, feelings, still to me
God's most disturbing mystery!

It was my doom — ev'n from the first,
When summon'd with my cherub peers,
To witness the young vernal burst
Of Nature through those blooming spheres,
Those flowers of light, that sprung beneath
The first touch of the' Eternal's breath —

It was my doom still to be haunted
By some new wonder, some sublime
And matchless work, that, for the time
Held all my soul, enchain'd, enchanted,
And left me not a thought, a dream,
A word, but on that only theme!

The wish to know — that endless thirst,
Which ev'n by quenching is awak'd,
And which becomes or blest or curst,
As is the fount whereat 'tis slak'd —
Still urg'd me onward, with desire
Insatiate, to explore, inquire —
Whate'er the wondrous things might be,
That wak'd each new idolatry —
Their cause, aim, source from whence they sprung,
Their inmost powers, as though for me
Existence on that knowledge hung.

Oh what a vision were the stars,
When first I saw them burn on high,
Rolling along, like living cars
Of light, for gods to journey by!
They were my heart's first passion — days
And nights, unwearied, in their rays
Have I hung floating, till each sense
Seem'd full of their bright influence.
Innocent joy! alas, how much
Of misery had I shunn'd below,
Could I have still liv'd blest with such;
Nor, proud and restless, burn'd to know
The knowledge that brings guilt and woe!

Often — so much I lov'd to trace
The secrets of this starry race —
Have I at morn and evening run
Along the lines of radiance spun,
Like webs, between them and the sun,

Untwisting all the tangled ties
Of light into their different dyes —
Then fleetly wing'd I off, in quest
Of those, the farthest, loneliest,
That watch, like winking sentinels,
The void, beyond which Chaos dwells,
And there, with noiseless plume, pursued
Their track through that grand solitude,
Asking intently all and each
What soul within their radiance dwelt,
And wishing their sweet light were speech,
That they might tell me all they felt.

Nay, oft, so passionate my chace
Of these resplendent heirs of space,
Oft did I follow — lest a ray
Should 'scape me in the farthest night —
Some pilgrim Comet, on his way

To visit distant shrines of light,
And well remember how I sung
Exulting out, when on my sight
New worlds of stars, all fresh and young,
As if just born of darkness, sprung!

Such was my pure ambition then,
My sinless transport, night and morn;
Ere this still newer world of men,
And that most fair of stars was born
Which I, in fatal hour, saw rise
Among the flowers of Paradise!
Thenceforth my nature all was chang'd,
My heart, soul, senses turn'd below;
And he, who but so lately rang'd
Yon wonderful expanse, where glow
Worlds upon worlds, yet found his mind
Ev'n in that luminous range confin'd,

Now blest the humblest, meanest sod
Of the dark earth where Woman trod!
In vain my former idols glisten'd
From their far thrones; in vain these ears
To the once-thrilling music listen'd,
That hymn'd around my favourite spheres —
To earth, to earth each thought was given,
That in this half-lost soul had birth;
Like some high mount, whose head's in heaven,
While its whole shadow rests on earth!

Nor was it Love, ev'n yet, that thrall'd
My spirit in his burning ties;
And less, still less could it be call'd
That grosser flame, round which Love flies
Nearer and nearer, till he dies —
No, it was wonder, such as thrill'd
At all God's works my dazzled sense;

The same rapt wonder, only fill'd
With passion, more profound, intense, —
A vehement, but wandering fire,
Which, though nor love, nor yet desire,
Though through all womankind it took
Its range, as vague as lightnings run,
Yet wanted but a touch, a look,
To fix it burning upon *One*.

Then, too, the ever-restless zeal,
The' insatiate curiosity
To know what shapes, so fair, must feel —
To look, but once, beneath the seal
Of so much loveliness, and see
What souls belong'd to those bright eyes —
Whether, as sun-beams find their way
Into the gem that hidden lies,
Those looks could inward turn their ray,

To make the soul as bright as they!
All this impell'd my anxious chace,
And still the more I saw and knew
Of Woman's fond, weak, conquering race,
The' intenser still my wonder grew.

I had beheld their First, their EVE,
Born in that splendid Paradise,
Which God made solely to receive
The first light of her waking eyes.
I had seen purest angels lean
In worship o'er her from above;
And man—oh yes, had envying seen
Proud man possess'd of all her love.

I saw their happiness, so brief,
So exquisite — her error, too,

That easy trust, that prompt belief
In what the warm heart wishes true;
That faith in words, when kindly said,
By which the whole fond sex is led —
Mingled with (what I durst not blame,
For 'tis my own) that wish to *know*,
Sad, fatal zeal, so sure of woe;
Which, though from heaven all pure it came,
Yet stain'd, misus'd, brought sin and shame
On her, on me, on all below!
I had seen this; had seen Man — arm'd
As his soul is with strength and sense —
By her first words to ruin charm'd;
His vaunted reason's cold defence,
Like an ice-barrier in the ray
Of melting summer, smil'd away!
Nay — stranger yet — spite of all this —
Though by her counsels taught to err,

Though driv'n from Paradise for her,
(And *with* her—*that*, at least, was bliss)
Had I not heard him, ere he crost
The threshold of that earthly heaven,
Which by her wildering smile he lost—
So quickly was the wrong forgiven—
Had I not heard him, as he prest
The frail, fond trembler to a breast
Which she had doom'd to sin and strife,
Call her—think what—his Life! his Life! *
Yes—such the love-taught name—the first,
That ruin'd Man to Woman gave,
Ev'n in his out-cast hour, when curst,
By her fond witchery, with that worst
And earliest boon of love—the grave!

* Chavah, the name by which Adam called the woman after their transgression, means "Life."—See Note.

She, who brought death into the world,
There stood before him, with the light
Of their lost Paradise still bright
Upon those sunny locks, that curl'd
Down her white shoulders to her feet—
So beautiful in form, so sweet
In heart and voice, as to redeem
The loss, the death of all things dear,
Except herself—and make it seem
Life, endless Life, while she was near!

Could I help wondering at a creature,
Enchanted round with spells so strong—
One, to whose every thought, word, feature,
In joy and woe, through right and wrong,
Such sweet omnipotence heaven gave,
To bless or ruin, curse or save?

Nor did the marvel cease with her—
New Eves in all her daughters came,
As strong to charm, as weak to err,
As sure of man through praise and blame,
Whate'er they brought him, pride or shame,
Their still unreasoning worshipper—
And, wheresoe'er they smil'd, the same
Enchantresses of soul and frame,
Into whose hands, from first to last,
This world with all its destinies,
Devotedly by heaven seems cast,
To save or damn it, as they please!

Oh, 'tis not to be told how long,
How restlessly I sigh'd to find
Some *one*, from out that shining throng,
Some abstract of the form and mind

Of the whole matchless sex, from which,
In my own arms beheld, possest,
I might learn all the powers to witch,
To warm, and (if my fate unblest
Would have it) ruin, of the rest!
Into whose inward soul and sense
I might descend, as doth the bee
Into the flower's deep heart, and thence
Rifle, in all its purity,
The prime, the quintessence, the whole
Of wondrous Woman's frame and soul!

At length, my burning wish, my prayer,—
(For such—oh what will tongues not dare,
When hearts go wrong?—this lip preferr'd)—
At length my ominous prayer was heard—
But whether heard in heaven or hell,
Listen—and you will know *too* well.

There was a maid, of all who move
Like visions o'er this orb, most fit
To be a bright young angel's love,
Herself so bright, so exquisite!
The pride, too, of her step, as light
Along the unconscious earth she went,
Seem'd that of one, born with a right
To walk some heavenlier element,
And tread in places where her feet
A star at every step should meet.
'Twas not alone that loveliness
By which the wilder'd sense is caught—
Of lips, whose very breath could bless—
Of playful blushes, that seem'd nought
But luminous escapes of thought—
Of eyes that, when by anger stirr'd,
Were fire itself, but, at a word

Of tenderness, all soft became
As though they could, like the sun's bird,
Dissolve away in their own flame —
Of form, as pliant as the shoots
Of a young tree, in vernal flower;
Yet round and glowing as the fruits
That drop from it in summer's hour —
'Twas not alone this loveliness
That falls to loveliest woman's share,
Though, even here, her form could spare
From its own beauty's rich excess
Enough to make all others fair —
But 'twas the Mind, sparkling about
Through her whole frame — the soul, brought out
To light each charm, yet independent
Of what it lighted, as the sun
That shines on flowers, would be resplendent
Were there no flowers to shine upon —

'Twas this, all this, in one combin'd,
The' unnumber'd looks and arts that form
The glory of young woman-kind,
Taken in their first fusion, warm,
Ere time had chill'd a single charm,
And stamp'd with such a seal of Mind,
As gave to beauties, that might be
Too sensual else, too unrefin'd,
The impress of divinity!
'Twas this — a union, which the hand
Of Nature kept for her alone,
Of every thing most playful, bland,
Voluptuous, spiritual, grand,
In angel-natures and her own—
Oh this it was that drew me nigh
One, who seem'd kin to heaven as I,
My bright twin sister of the sky—

One, in whose love, I felt, were given
The mix'd delights of either sphere,
All that the spirit seeks in heaven,
And all the senses burn for here!

Had we — but hold — hear every part
Of our sad tale — spite of the pain
Remembrance gives, when the fix'd dart
Is stirr'd thus in the wound again —
Hear every step, so full of bliss,
And yet so ruinous, that led
Down to the last, dark precipice,
Where perish'd both — the fall'n, the dead!

From the first hour she caught my sight,
I never left her — day and night
Hovering unseen around her way,
And mid her loneliest musings near,

I soon could track each thought that lay,
Gleaming within her heart, as clear
As pebbles within brooks appear;
And there, among the countless things
That keep young hearts for ever glowing,
Vague wishes, fond imaginings,
Love-dreams, as yet no object knowing —
Light, winged hopes, that come when bid,
And rainbow joys that end in weeping,
And passions, among pure thoughts hid,
Like serpents under flow'rets sleeping —
'Mong all these feelings — felt where'er
Young hearts are beating — I saw there
Proud thoughts, aspirings high — beyond
Whate'er yet dwelt in soul so fond —
Glimpses of glory, far away
Into the bright, vague future given,

And fancies, free and grand, whose play,
Like that of eaglets, is near heaven!
With this, too — what a soul and heart
To fall beneath the tempter's art! —
A zeal for knowledge, such as ne'er
Enshrin'd itself in form so fair
Since that first, fatal hour, when Eve,
With every fruit of Eden blest,
Save only *one*, rather than leave
That one unknown, lost all the rest.

It was in dreams that first I stole
With gentle mastery o'er her mind —
In that rich twilight of the soul,
When Reason's beam, half-hid behind
The clouds of sense, obscurely gilds
Each shadowy shape that Fancy builds —

'Twas then, by that soft light, I brought
Vague, glimmering visions to her view —
Catches of radiance, lost when caught,
Bright labyrinths, that led to nought,
And vistas, with a void seen through —
Dwellings of bliss, that opening shone,
Then clos'd, dissolv'd, and left no trace —
All that, in short, could tempt Hope on,
But give her wing no resting-place;
Myself the while, with brow, as yet,
Pure as the young moon's coronet,
Through every dream *still* in her sight,
The' enchanter of each mocking scene,
Who gave the hope, then brought the blight,
Who said 'Behold yon world of light,'
Then sudden dropt a veil between!

At length, when I perceiv'd each thought,
Waking or sleeping, fix'd on nought
But these illusive scenes, and me,
The phantom, who thus came and went,
In half revealments, only meant
To madden curiosity—
When by such various arts I found
Her fancy to its utmost wound,
One night—'twas in a holy spot,
Which she for pray'r had chos'n—a grot
Of purest marble, built below
Her garden beds, through which a glow
From lamps invisible then stole,
Brightly pervading all the place—
Like that mysterious light the soul,
Itself unseen, sheds through the face—
There, at her altar while she knelt,
And all that woman ever felt,

When God and man both claim'd her sighs—
Every warm thought, that ever dwelt,
Like summer clouds, 'twixt earth and skies,
Too pure to fall, too gross to rise,
Spoke in her gestures, tones and eyes,—
Thus, by the tender light, which lay
Dissolving round, as if its ray
Was breath'd from her, I heard her say:—

"Oh idol of my dreams! whate'er
"Thy nature be—human, divine,
"Or but half heav'nly—still too fair,
"Too heavenly to be ever mine!

"Wonderful Spirit, who dost make
"Slumber so lovely, that it seems
"No longer life to live awake,
"Since heaven itself descends in dreams,

" Why do I ever lose thee? why—
" When on thy realms and thee I gaze—
" Still drops that veil, which I could die,
" Oh gladly, but one hour to raise?

" Long ere such miracles as thou
" And thine came o'er my thoughts, a thirst
" For light was in this soul, which now
" Thy looks have into passion nurs'd.

" There's nothing bright above, below,
" In sky—earth—ocean, that this breast
" Doth not intensely burn to know,
" And thee, thee, thee, o'er all the rest!

" Then come, oh Spirit, from behind
" The curtains of thy radiant home,

" Whether thou would'st as God be shrin'd,
" Or lov'd and clasp'd as mortal, come!

" Bring all thy dazzling wonders here,
" That I may waking know and see—
" Or waft me hence to thy own sphere,
" Thy heaven or — aye, even *that* with thee!

" Demon or God, who hold'st the book
" Of knowledge spread beneath thine eye,
" Give me, with thee, but one bright look
" Into its leaves, and let me die!

" By those ethereal wings, whose way
" Lies through an element, so fraught
" With floating Mind, that, as they play,
" Their every movement is a thought!

" By that most precious hair, between
" Whose golden clusters the sweet wind
" Of Paradise so late hath been,
" And left its fragrant soul behind!

" By those impassion'd eyes, that melt
" Their light into the inmost heart,
" Like sunset in the waters, felt
" As molten fire through every part,—

" I do implore thee, oh most bright
" And worshipp'd Spirit, shine but o'er
" My waking, wondering eyes this night,
" This one blest night—I ask no more!"

Exhausted, breathless, as she said
These burning words, her languid head

Upon the altar's steps she cast,
As if that brain-throb were its last—
Till, startled by the breathing, nigh,
Of lips, that echoed back her sigh,
Sudden her brow again she rais'd,
And there, just lighted on the shrine,
Beheld me—not as I had blaz'd
Around her, full of light divine,
In her late dreams, but soften'd down
Into more mortal grace—my crown
Of flowers, too radiant for this world,
Left hanging on yon starry steep;
My wings shut up, like banners furl'd,
When Peace hath put their pomp to sleep;
Or like autumnal clouds, that keep
Their lightnings sheath'd, rather than mar
The dawning hour of some young star—

And nothing left, but what beseem'd
The' accessible, though glorious mate
Of mortal woman — whose eyes beam'd
Back upon hers, as passionate;
Whose ready heart brought flame for flame,
Whose sin, whose madness was the same,
And whose soul lost, in that one hour,
For her and for her love — oh more
Of heaven's light than ev'n the power
Of heav'n itself could now restore!

And yet that hour!" ——

The Spirit here
Stopp'd in his utterance, as if words
Gave way beneath the wild career
Of his then rushing thoughts — like chords,

Midway in some enthusiast's song,
Breaking beneath a touch too strong —
While the clench'd hand upon the brow
Told how remembrance throbb'd there now!
But soon 'twas o'er—that casual blaze
From the sunk fire of other days,
That relic of a flame, whose burning
Had been too fierce to be relum'd,
Soon pass'd away, and the youth, turning
To his bright listeners, thus resum'd:—

"Days, months elaps'd, and, though what most
On earth I sigh'd for was mine, all, —
Yet—was I happy? God, thou know'st,
Howe'er they smile, and feign, and boast,
What happiness is theirs, who fall!
'Twas bitterest anguish—made more keen
Ev'n by the love, the bliss, between

Whose throbs it came, like gleams of hell
In agonizing cross-light given
Athwart the glimpses, they who dwell
In purgatory catch of heaven!
The only feeling that to me
Seem'd joy, or rather my sole rest
From aching misery, was to see
My young, proud, blooming Lilis blest—
She, the fair fountain of all ill
To my lost soul—whom yet its thirst
Fervidly panted after still,
And found the charm fresh as at first!—
To see *her* happy—to reflect
Whatever beams still round me play'd
Of former pride, of glory wreck'd,
On her, my Moon, whose light I made,
And whose soul worshipp'd ev'n my shade—

This was, I own, enjoyment—this
My sole, last lingering glimpse of bliss.

And proud she was, bright creature!—proud,
Beyond what ev'n most queenly stirs
In woman's heart, nor would have bow'd
That beautiful young brow of hers
To aught beneath the First above,
So high she deem'd her Cherub's love!

Then, too, that passion, hourly growing
Stronger and stronger—to which even
Her love, at times, gave way—of knowing
Every thing strange in earth and heaven;
Not only what God loves to show,
But all that He hath seal'd below
In darkness, for man *not* to know—

Ev'n this desire, alas, ill-starr'd
And fatal as it was, I sought
To feed each minute, and unbarr'd
Such realms of wonder on her thought,
As ne'er, till then, had let their light
Escape on any mortal's sight!
In the deep earth—beneath the sea—
Through caves of fire—through wilds of air—
Wherever sleeping Mystery
Had spread her curtain, we were there—
Love still beside us, as we went,
At home in each new element,
And sure of worship every where!

Then first was Nature taught to lay
The wealth of all her kingdoms down
At woman's worshipp'd feet, and say,
"Bright creature, this is all thine own!"

Then first were diamonds caught—like eyes
Shining in darkness—by surprise,
And made to light the conquering way
Of proud young beauty with their ray.
Then, too, the pearl from out its shell
Unsightly, in the sunless sea,
(As 'twere a spirit, forc'd to dwell
In form unlovely) was set free,
And round the neck of woman threw
A light it lent and borrow'd too.
For never did this maid—whate'er
The' ambition of the hour—forget
Her sex's pride in being fair,
Nor that adornment, tasteful, rare,
Which makes the mighty magnet, set
In Woman's form, more mighty yet.
Nor was there aught within the range
Of my swift wing in sea or air,

Of beautiful, or grand, or strange,
That, quickly as her wish could change,
I did not seek, with such fond care,
That when I've seen her look above
At some bright star admiringly,
I've said "nay, look not there, my love,
Alas, I *cannot* give it thee!"

But not alone the wonders found
Through Nature's realm—the unveil'd, material,
Visible glories, that hang round,
Like lights, through her enchanted ground—
But whatsoe'er unseen, ethereal,
Dwells far away from human sense,
Wrapp'd in its own intelligence—
The mystery of that Fountain-head,
From which all vital spirit runs,

All breath of Life, where'er 'tis shed,
Through men or angels, flowers or suns—
The workings of the Almighty Mind,
When first o'er Chaos he design'd
The outlines of this world; and through
That spread of darkness—like the bow,
Call'd out of rain-clouds, hue by hue—
Saw the grand, gradual picture grow!—
The covenant with human kind
Which God hath made—the chains of Fate
He round himself and them hath twin'd,
Till his high task he consummate—
Till good from evil, love from hate,
Shall be work'd out through sin and pain,
And Fate shall loose her iron chain,
And all be free, be bright again!

Such were the deep-drawn mysteries,
And some, perhaps, ev'n more profound,
More wildering to the mind than these,
Which—far as woman's thought could sound,
Or a fall'n, outlaw'd spirit reach—
She dar'd to learn, and I to teach.
Till—fill'd with such unearthly lore,
And mingling the pure light it brings
With much that fancy had, before,
Shed in false, tinted glimmerings —
The' enthusiast girl spoke out, as one
Inspir'd, among her own dark race,
Who from their altars, in the sun
Left standing half adorn'd, would run
To gaze upon her holier face.
And, though but wild the things she spoke,
Yet mid that play of error's smoke

Into fair shapes by fancy curl'd,
Some gleams of pure religion broke —
Glimpses, that have not yet awoke,
But startled the still dreaming world!
Oh, many a truth, remote, sublime,
Which God would from the minds of men
Have kept conceal'd, till his own time,
Stole out in these revealments then —
Revealments dim, that have fore-run,
By ages, the bright, Saving One! *
Like that imperfect dawn, or light
Escaping from the Zodiac's signs,

* It is the opinion of some of the Fathers, that the knowledge which the Heathens possessed of the Providence of God, a Future State, and other sublime doctrines of Christianity, was derived from the premature revelations of these fallen angels to the women of earth. — See Note.

Which makes the doubtful east half bright
Before the real morning shines!

Thus did some moons of bliss go by—
Of bliss to her, who saw but love
And knowledge throughout earth and sky;
To whose enamour'd soul and eye,
I seem'd, as is the sun on high,
The light of all below, above,
The spirit of sea, land, and air,
Whose influence, felt every where,
Spread from its centre, her own heart,
Ev'n to the world's extremest part—
While through that world her reinless mind
Had now career'd so fast and far,
That earth itself seem'd left behind,
And her proud fancy, unconfin'd,
Already saw heaven's gates a-jar!

Happy enthusiast! still, oh, still
Spite of my own heart's mortal chill,
Spite of that double-fronted sorrow,
Which looks at once before and back,
Beholds the yesterday, the morrow,
And sees both comfortless, both black—
Spite of all this, I could have still
In her delight forgot all ill;
Or, if pain *would* not be forgot,
At least have borne and murmur'd not.
When thoughts of an offended heaven,
Of sinfulness, which I—ev'n I,
While down its steep most headlong driven,—
Well knew could never be forgiven,
Came o'er me with an agony
Beyond all reach of mortal woe,—
A torture kept for those who know,

Know every thing, and, worst of all,
Know and love virtue while they fall!—
Ev'n then, her presence had the power
To soothe, to warm;—nay, ev'n to bless—
If ever bliss could graft its flower
On stem so full of bitterness—
Ev'n then her glorious smile to me
Brought warmth and radiance, if not balm,
Like moonlight on a troubled sea,
Brightening the storm it cannot calm.

Oft, too, when that disheartening fear,
Which all who love, beneath the sky,
Feel, when they gaze on what is dear—
The dreadful thought that it must die!
That desolating thought, which comes
Into men's happiest hours and homes;

Whose melancholy boding flings
Death's shadow o'er the brightest things,
Sicklies the infant's bloom, and spreads
The grave beneath young lovers' heads!
This fear, so sad to all—to me
Most full of sadness, from the thought
That I must still live on, when she
Would, like the snow that on the sea
Fell yesterday, in vain be sought—
That heaven to me the final seal
Of all earth's sorrow would deny,
And I eternally must feel
The death-pang, without power to die!
Ev'n this, her fond endearments—fond
As ever twisted the sweet bond
'Twixt heart and heart—could charm away;
Before her look no clouds would stay,

Or, if they did, their gloom was gone,
Their darkness put a glory on!
There seem'd a freshness in her breath,
Beyond the reach, the power of death;
And then, her voice—oh, who could doubt
That 'twould for ever thus breathe out
A music, like the harmony
Of the tun'd orbs, too sweet to die!
While in her lip's awakening touch
There thrill'd a life ambrosial—such
As mantles in the fruit steep'd through
With Eden's most delicious dew—
Till I could almost think, though known
And lov'd as human, they had grown
By bliss, celestial as my own!

But 'tis not, 'tis not for the wrong,
The guilty, to be happy long;

And she, too, now, had sunk within
The shadow of her tempter's sin —
Shadow of death, whose withering frown
Kills whatsoe'er it lights upon —
Too deep for ev'n *her* soul to shun
The desolation it brings down!

Listen, and, if a tear there be
Left in your hearts, weep it for me.

'Twas on the evening of a day,
Which we in love had dream'd away;
In that same garden, where, beneath
The silent earth, stripp'd of my wreath,
And furling up those wings, whose light
For mortal gaze were else too bright,
I first had stood before her sight;

And found myself—oh, ecstacy,
Which ev'n in pain I ne'er forget—
Worshipp'd as only God should be,
And lov'd as never man was yet!
In that same garden we were now,
Thoughtfully side by side reclining,
Her eyes turn'd upward, and her brow
With its own silent fancies shining.
It was an evening bright and still
As ever blush'd on wave or bower,
Smiling from heaven, as if nought ill
Could happen in so sweet an hour.
Yet, I remember, both grew sad
In looking at that light—ev'n she,
Of heart so fresh, and brow so glad,
Felt the mute hour's solemnity,
And thought she saw, in that repose,
The death-hour not alone of light,

But of this whole fair world—the close.
Of all things beautiful and bright—
The last, grand sun-set, in whose ray
Nature herself died calm away!

At length, as if some thought, awaking
Suddenly, sprung within her breast—
Like a young bird, when day-light breaking
Startles him from his dreamy nest—
She turn'd upon me her dark eyes,
Dilated into that full shape
They took in joy, reproach, surprise,
As if to let more soul escape,
And, playfully as on my head
Her white hand rested, smil'd and said:—

"I had, last night, a dream of thee,
"Resembling those divine ones, given,

" Like preludes to sweet minstrelsy,
" Before thou cam'st, thyself, from heaven

" The same rich wreath was on thy brow,
" Dazzling as if of star-light made;
" And these wings, lying darkly now,
" Like meteors round thee flash'd and play'd.

" All bright as in those happy dreams
" Thou stood'st, a creature to adore
" No less than love, breathing out beams,
" As flowers do fragrance, at each pore!

" Sudden I felt thee draw me near
" To thy pure heart, where, fondly plac'd,
" I seem'd within the atmosphere
" Of that exhaling light embrac'd;

" And, as thou heldst me there, the flame
" Pass'd from thy heavenly soul to mine,
" Till—oh, too blissful—I became,
" Like thee, all spirit, all divine.

" Say, why did dream so bright come o'er me,
" If, now I wake, 'tis faded, gone?
" When will my Cherub shine before me
" Thus radiant, as in heaven he shone?

" When shall I, waking, be allow'd
" To gaze upon those perfect charms,
" And hold thee thus, without a cloud,
" A chill of earth, within my arms?

" Oh what a pride to say—this, this
" Is my own Angel—all divine,

" And pure, and dazzling as he is,
" And fresh from heaven, he's mine, he's mine!

" Think'st thou, were LILIS in thy place,
" A creature of yon lofty skies,
" She would have hid one single grace,
" One glory from her lover's eyes?

" No, no—then, if thou lov'st like me,
" Shine out, young Spirit, in the blaze
" Of thy most proud divinity,
" Nor think thou'lt wound this mortal gaze.

" Too long have I look'd doating on
" Those ardent eyes, intense ev'n thus—
" Too near the stars themselves have gone,
" To fear aught grand or luminous.

" Then doubt me not—oh, who can say
" But that this dream may yet come true,
" And my blest spirit drink thy ray
" Till it becomes all heavenly too?

" Let me this once but feel the flame
" Of those spread wings, the very pride
" Will change my nature, and this frame
" By the mere touch be deified!"

Thus spoke the maid, as one, not us'd
To be by man or God refus'd—
As one, who felt her influence o'er
All creatures, whatsoe'er they were,
And, though to heaven she could not soar,
At least would bring down heaven to her!

Little did she, alas, or I—
Ev'n I, whose soul, but half-way yet
Immerg'd in sin's obscurity,
Was as the planet where we lie,
O'er half whose disk the sun is set—
Little did we foresee the fate,
The dreadful—how can it be told?
Oh God! such anguish to relate
Is o'er again to feel, behold!
But, charg'd as 'tis, my heart must speak
Its sorrow out, or it will break!

Some dark misgivings *had*, I own,
Pass'd for a moment through my breast—
Fears of some danger, vague, unknown,
To one, or both—something unblest
To happen from this proud request.

But soon these boding fancies fled;
Nor saw I aught that could forbid
My full revealment, save the dread
Of that first dazzle, that unhid
And bursting glory on a lid
Untried in heaven — and ev'n this glare
She might, by love's own nursing care,
Be, like young eagles, taught to bear.
For well I knew the lustre shed
From my rich wings, when proudliest spread,
Was, in its nature, lambent, pure,
And innocent as is the light
The glow-worm hangs out to allure
Her mate to her green bower at night.
Oft had I, in the mid-air, swept
Through clouds in which the lightning slept,
As in his lair, ready to spring,

Yet wak'd him not—though from my wing
A thousand sparks fell glittering!
Oft too when round me from above
The feather'd snow (which, for its whiteness,
In my pure days I used to love)
Fell, like the moultings of heaven's Dove, —
So harmless, though so full of brightness,
Was my brow's wreath, that it would shake
From off its flowers each downy flake
As delicate, unmelted, fair,
And cool as they had fallen there!

Nay ev'n with Lilis—had I not
Around her sleep in splendor come—
Hung o'er each beauty, nor forgot
To print my radiant lips on some?
And yet, at morn, from that repose,
Had she not wak'd, unscath'd and bright,

As doth the pure, unconscious rose,
Though by the fire-fly kiss'd all night?
Ev'n when the rays I scatter'd stole
Intensest to her dreaming soul,
No thrill disturb'd th' insensate frame —
So subtle, so refin'd that flame,
Which, rapidly as lightnings melt
The blade within the unharm'd sheath,
Can, by the outward form unfelt,
Reach and dissolve the soul beneath!

Thus having (as, alas, deceiv'd
By my sin's blindness, I believ'd)
No cause for dread, and those black eyes
There fix'd upon me, eagerly
As if the' unlocking of the skies
Then waited but a sign from me—

How was I to refuse? how say
One word that in her heart could stir
A fear, a doubt, but that each ray
I brought from heaven belong'd to her!
Slow from her side I rose, while she
Stood up, too, mutely, tremblingly,
But not with fear—all hope, desire,
She waited for the awful boon,
Like priestesses, with eyes of fire
Watching the rise of the full moon,
Whose beams—they know, yet cannot shun—
Will madden them when look'd upon!
Of all my glories, the bright crown,
Which, when I last from heaven came down,
I left—see, where those clouds afar
Sail through the west—there hangs it yet,
Shining remote, more like a star
Than a fall'n angel's coronet—

Of all my glories, this alone
Was wanting—but the' illumin'd brow,
The curls, like tendrils that had grown
Out of the sun—the eyes, that now
Had love's light added to their own,
And shed a blaze, before unknown
Ev'n to themselves—the' unfolded wings
From which, as from two radiant springs,
Sparkles fell fast around, like spray—
All I could bring of heaven's array,
Of that rich panoply of charms
A Cherub moves in, on the day
Of his best pomp, I now put on;
And, proud that in her eyes I shone
Thus glorious, glided to her arms,
Which still (though at a sight so splendid
Her dazzled brow had instantly

Sunk on her breast) were wide extended
To clasp the form she durst not see!

Great God! how *could* thy vengeance light
So bitterly on one so bright?
How could the hand, that gave such charms,
Blast them again, in love's own arms?
Scarce had I touch'd her shrinking frame,
When—oh most horrible!—I felt
That every spark of that pure flame—
Pure, while among the stars I dwelt—
Was now by my transgression turn'd
Into gross, earthly fire, which burn'd,
Burn'd all it touch'd, as fast as eye
Could follow the fierce, ravening flashes,
Till there—oh God, I still ask why
Such doom was hers?—I saw her lie
Black'ning within my arms to ashes!

Those cheeks, a glory but to see—
Those lips, whose touch was what the first
Fresh cup of immortality
Is to a new-made angel's thirst!
Those arms, within whose gentle round,
My heart's horizon, the whole bound
Of its hope, prospect, heaven was found!
Which, ev'n in this dread moment, fond
As when they first were round me cast,
Loos'd not in death the' fatal bond,
But, burning, held me to the last—
That hair, from under whose dark veil,
The snowy neck, like a white sail
At moonlight seen 'twixt wave and wave,
Shone out by gleams—that hair, to save
But one of whose long, glossy wreaths,
I could have died ten thousand deaths!—

All, all, that seem'd, one minute since,
So full of love's own redolence,
Now, parch'd and black, before me lay,
Withering in agony away;
And mine, oh misery! mine the flame,
From which this desolation came—
And I the fiend, whose foul caress
Had blasted all that loveliness!

'Twas madd'ning, 'twas — but hear even worse —
Had death, death only, been the curse
I brought upon her — had the doom
But ended here, when her young bloom
Lay in the dust, and did the spirit
No part of that fell curse inherit,
'Twere not so dreadful — but, come near —
Too shocking 'tis for earth to hear —

Just when her eyes, in fading, took
Their last, keen, agoniz'd farewell,
And look'd in mine with — oh, that look!
Avenging Power, whate'er the hell
Thou may'st to human souls assign,
The memory of that look is mine! —
In her last struggle, on my brow
Her ashy lips a kiss imprest,
So withering! — I feel it now —
'Twas fire — but fire, ev'n more unblest
Than was my own, and like that flame,
The angels shudder but to name,
Hell's everlasting element!
Deep, deep it pierc'd into my brain,
Madd'ning and torturing as it went,
And here — see here, the mark, the stain
It left upon my front — burnt in
By that last kiss of love and sin —

A brand, which ev'n the wreathed pride
Of these bright curls, still forc'd aside
By its foul contact, cannot hide!

But is it thus, dread Providence—
Can it, indeed, be thus, that she,
Who, but for one proud, fond offence,
Had honour'd heaven itself, should be
Now doom'd — I cannot speak it — no,
Merciful God! it *is* not so —
Never could lips divine have said
The fiat of a fate so dread.
And yet, that look — that look, so fraught
With more than anguish, with despair —
That new, fierce fire, resembling nought
In heaven or earth — this scorch I bear! —
Oh, — for the first time that these knees
Have bent before thee since my fall,

Great Power, if ever thy decrees
  Thou could'st for prayer like mine recall,
Pardon that spirit, and on me,
  On me, who taught her pride to err,
Shed out each drop of agony
  Thy burning phial keeps for her!
See, too, where low beside me kneel
  Two other out-casts, who, though gone
And lost themselves, yet dare to feel
  And pray for that poor mortal one.
Alas, too well, too well they know
The pain, the penitence, the woe
That Passion brings down on the best,
The wisest and the loveliest. —
Oh, who is to be sav'd, if such
  Bright, erring souls are not forgiven;
So loth they wander, and so much
  Their very wanderings lean tow'rds heaven!

Again, I cry, Just God, transfer
That creature's sufferings all to me —
Mine, mine the guilt, the torment be,
To save one minute's pain to her,
Let mine last all eternity !"

He paus'd, and to the earth bent down
His throbbing head; while they, who felt
That agony as 'twere their own,
Those angel youths, beside him knelt,
And, in the night's still silence there,
While mournfully each wandering air
Play'd in those plumes, that never more
To their lost home in heav'n must soar,
Breath'd inwardly the voiceless prayer,
Unheard by all but Mercy's ear —
And which if Mercy *did not* hear,

Oh, God would not be what this bright
And glorious universe of his,
This world of beauty, goodness, light
And endless love proclaims He *is!*

Not long they knelt, when, from a wood
That crown'd that airy solitude,
They heard a low, uncertain sound,
As from a lute, that just had found
Some happy theme, and murmur'd round
The new-born fancy—with fond tone,
Like that of ring-dove o'er her brood—
Scarce thinking aught so sweet its own!
Till soon a voice, that match'd as well
That gentle instrument, as suits
The sea-air to an ocean-shell,
(So kin its spirit to the lute's,)

Tremblingly follow'd the soft strain,
Interpreting its joy, its pain,
And lending the light wings of words
To many a thought, that else had lain
Unfledg'd and mute among the chords.

All started at the sound — but chief
The third young Angel, in whose face,
Though faded like the others, grief
Had left a gentler, holier trace;
As if, ev'n yet, through pain and ill,
Hope had not quit him — as if still
Her precious pearl, in sorrow's cup,
Unmelted at the bottom lay,
To shine again, when, all drunk up,
The bitterness should pass away.
Chiefly did he, though in his eyes
There shone more pleasure than surprise,

Turn to the wood, from whence that sound
Of solitary sweetness broke,
Then, listening, look delighted round
To his bright peers, while thus it spoke: —

" Come, pray with me, my seraph love,
" My angel-lord, come pray with me;
" In vain to-night my lip hath strove
" To send one holy prayer above —
" The knee may bend, the lip may move,
" But pray I cannot, without thee!

" I've fed the altar in my bower
" With droppings from the incense tree;
" I've shelter'd it from wind and shower,
" But dim it burns the livelong hour,
" As if, like me, it had no power
" Of life or lustre, without thee!

" A boat at midnight sent alone
" To drift upon the moonless sea,
" A lute, whose leading chord is gone,
" A wounded bird, that hath but one
" Imperfect wing to soar upon,
" Are like what I am, without thee!

" Then ne'er, my spirit-love, divide,
" In life or death, thyself from me;
" But when again, in sunny pride,
" Thou walk'st through Eden, let me glide,
" A prostrate shadow, by thy side—
" Oh happier thus than without thee!"

The song had ceas'd, when, from the wood —
Where, curving down that airy height,
It reach'd the spot on which they stood —
There suddenly shone out a light

From a clear lamp, which, as it blaz'd
Across the brow of one, who rais'd
The flame aloft, (as if to throw
Its light upon that group below)
Display'd two eyes, sparkling between
The dusky leaves, such as are seen
By fancy only, in those faces,
That haunt a poet's walk at even,
Looking from out their leafy places
Upon his dreams of love and heaven.
'Twas but a moment—the blush, brought
O'er all her features at the thought
Of being seen thus, late, alone,
By any but the eyes she sought,
Had scarcely for an instant shone
Through the dark leaves when she was gone—
Gone, like a meteor that o'erhead
Suddenly shines, and, ere we've said,
"Look, look, how beautiful!"—'tis fled.

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Yet, ere she went, the words, " I come,
" I come, my NAMA," reach'd her ear,
In that kind voice, familiar, dear,
Which tells of confidence, of home, —
Of habit, that hath drawn hearts near,
Till they grow *one* — of faith sincere,
And all that Love most loves to hear!
A music, breathing of the past,
The present and the time to be,
Where Hope and Memory, to the last,
Lengthen out life's true harmony!

Nor long did he, whom call so kind
Summon'd away, remain behind;
Nor did there need much time to tell
What they — alas, more fall'n than he
From happiness and heaven — knew well,
His gentler love's short history!

Thus did it run — *not* as he told
The tale himself, but as 'tis grav'd
Upon the tablets that, of old,
By CHAM were from the deluge sav'd,
All written over with sublime
And saddening legends of the' unblest,
But glorious Spirits of that time,
And this young Angel's 'mong the rest.

THIRD ANGEL'S STORY.

Among the Spirits, of pure flame,
That round the' Almighty Throne abide—
Circles of light, that from the same
Eternal centre sweeping wide,
Carry its beams on every side,
(Like spheres of air that waft around
The undulations of rich sound)
Till the far-circling radiance be
Diffus'd into infinity!
First and immediate near the Throne,
As if peculiarly God's own,
The Seraphs * stand—this burning sign
Trac'd on their banner, "Love Divine!"

* The Seraphim are the Spirits of Divine Love.—See Note.

Their rank, their honours, far above
Ev'n those to high-brow'd Cherubs given,
Though knowing all — so much doth Love
Transcend all Knowledge, ev'n in heaven!

'Mong these was ZARAPH once — and none
E'er felt affection's holy fire,
Or yearn'd towards the' Eternal One,
With half such longing, deep desire.
Love was to his impassion'd soul
Not, as with others, a mere part
Of its existence, but the whole —
The very life-breath of his heart!

Often, when from the' Almighty brow
A lustre came, too bright to bear,
And all the seraph ranks would bow
Their heads beneath their wings, nor dare
To look upon the' effulgence there —

This Spirit's eyes would court the blaze,
(Such pride he in adoring took)
And rather lose, in that one gaze,
The power of looking, than *not* look!
Then too, when angel voices sung
The mercy of their God, and strung
Their harps to hail, with welcome sweet,
The moment, watch'd for by all eyes,
When some repentant sinner's feet
First touch'd the threshold of the skies,
Oh then how clearly did the voice
Of ZARAPH above all rejoice!
Love was in every buoyant tone,
Such love, as only could belong
To the blest angels, and alone
Could, ev'n from angels, bring such song!

Alas, that it should e'er have been
The same in heaven as it is here,
Where nothing fond or bright is seen,
But it hath pain and peril near—
Where right and wrong so close resemble,
That what we take for virtue's thrill
Is often the first downward tremble
Of the heart's balance into ill—
Where Love hath not a shrine so pure,
So holy, but the serpent, Sin,
In moments, ev'n the most secure,
Beneath his altar may glide in!

So was it with that Angel—such
The charm, that slop'd his fall along
From good to ill, from loving much,
Too easy lapse, to loving wrong.—

Ev'n so that am'rous Spirit, bound
By beauty's spell, where'er 'twas found,
From the bright things above the moon
Down to earth's beaming eyes descended,
Till love for the Creator soon
In passion for the creature ended!

'Twas first at twilight, on the shore
Of the smooth sea, he heard the lute
And voice of her he lov'd steal o'er
The silver waters, that lay mute,
As loth, by ev'n a breath, to stay
The pilgrimage of that sweet lay;
Whose echoes still went on and on,
Till lost among the light that shone
Far off, beyond the ocean's brim—
There, where the rich cascade of day

Had, o'er the' horizon's golden rim,
Into Elysium roll'd away!
Of God she sung, and of the mild
Attendant Mercy, that beside
His awful throne for ever smil'd,
Ready, with her white hand, to guide
His bolts of vengeance to their prey —
That she might quench them on the way!
Of Peace — of that Atoning Love,
Upon whose star, shining above
This twilight world of hope and fear,
The weeping eyes of Faith are fix'd
So fond, that with her every tear
The light of that love-star is mix'd! —
All this she sung, and such a soul
Of piety was in that song,
That the charm'd Angel, as it stole
Tenderly to his ear, along

Those lulling waters where he lay,
Watching the day-light's dying ray,
Thought 'twas a voice from out the wave,
An echo, that some spirit gave
To Eden's distant harmony,
Heard faint and sweet beneath the sea!

Quickly, however, to its source,
Tracking that music's melting course,
He saw, upon the golden sand
Of the sea-shore a maiden stand,
Before whose feet the' expiring waves
Flung their last tribute with a sigh—
As, in the East, exhausted slaves
Lay down the far-brought gift, and die—
And, while her lute hung by her, hush'd,
As if unequal to the tide

Of song, that from her lips still gush'd,
She rais'd, like one beatified,
Those eyes, whose light seem'd rather given
To be ador'd than to adore—
Such eyes, as may have look'd *from* heaven,
But ne'er were rais'd to it before!

Oh Love, Religion, Music—all
That's left of Eden upon earth—
The only blessings, since the fall
Of our weak souls, that still recall
A trace of their high, glorious birth—
How kindred are the dreams you bring!
How Love, though unto earth so prone,
Delights to take Religion's wing,
When time or grief hath stain'd his own!
How near to Love's beguiling brink,
Too oft, entranc'd Religion lies!

While Music, Music is the link
They *both* still hold by to the skies,
The language of their native sphere,
Which they had else forgotten here.

How then could ZARAPH fail to feel
That moment's witcheries?—one, so fair,
Breathing out music, that might steal
Heaven from itself, and rapt in prayer
That seraphs might be proud to share!
Oh, he *did* feel it—far too well—
With warmth, that much too dearly cost—
Nor knew he, when at last he fell,
To which attraction, to which spell,
Love, Music, or Devotion, most
His soul in that sweet hour was lost.

Sweet was the hour, though dearly won,
And pure, as aught of earth could be,
For then first did the glorious sun
Before religion's altar see
Two hearts in wedlock's golden tie
Self-pledg'd, in love to live and die —
Then first did woman's virgin brow
That hymeneal chaplet wear,
Which when it dies, no second vow
Can bid a new one bloom out there —
Blest union! by that Angel wove,
And worthy from such hands to come;
Safe, sole asylum, in which Love,
When fall'n or exil'd from above,
In this dark world can find a home.

And, though the Spirit had transgress'd,
Had, from his station 'mong the blest

Won down by woman's smile, allow'd
Terrestrial passion to breathe o'er
The mirror of his heart, and cloud
God's image, there so bright before —
Yet never did that God look down
On error with a brow so mild;
Never did justice launch a frown,
That, ere it fell, so nearly smil'd.
For gentle was their love, with awe
And trembling like a treasure kept,
That was not theirs by holy law,
Whose beauty with remorse they saw,
And o'er whose preciousness they wept.
Humility, that low, sweet root,
From which all heavenly virtues shoot,
Was in the hearts of both—but most
In NAMA's heart, by whom alone

Those charms, for which a heaven was lost,
Seem'd all unvalued and unknown;
And when her Seraph's eyes she caught,
And hid hers glowing on his breast,
Ev'n bliss was humbled by the thought—
"What claim have I to be so blest?"

Still less could maid, so meek, have nurs'd
Desire of knowledge—that vain thirst,
With which the sex hath all been curs'd,
From luckless Eve to her, who near
The Tabernacle stole to hear
The secrets of the angels—no—
To love as her own Seraph lov'd,
With Faith, the same through bliss and woe—
Faith, that, were ev'n its light remov'd,
Could, like the dial, fix'd remain,
And wait till it shone out again—

With Patience that, though often bow'd
By the rude storm, can rise anew,
And Hope that, ev'n from Evil's cloud,
Sees sunny Good half breaking through!
This deep, relying Love, worth more
In heaven than all a cherub's lore —
This Faith, more sure than aught beside,
Was the sole joy, ambition, pride
Of her fond heart — the' unreasoning scope
Of all its views, above, below —
So true she felt it that to *hope*,
To *trust*, is happier than to *know*.

And thus in humbleness they trod,
Abash'd, but pure before their God;
Nor e'er did earth behold a sight
So meekly beautiful as they,

When, with the altar's holy light
Full on their brows, they knelt to pray,
Hand within hand, and side by side,
Two links of love, awhile untied
From the great chain above, but fast
Holding together to the last —
Two fallen Splendors, from that tree,
Which buds with such eternally, *
Shaken to earth, yet keeping all
Their light and freshness in the fall.

Their only punishment (as wrong,
However sweet, must bear its brand)
Their only doom was this — that, long
As the green earth and ocean stand,

* An allusion to the Sephiroths or Splendors of the Jewish Cabbala, represented as a tree, of which God is the crown or summit. — See Note.

They both shall wander here—the same,
Throughout all time, in heart and frame—
Still looking to that goal sublime,
Whose light remote, but sure, they see,
Pilgrims of Love, whose way is Time,
Whose home is in Eternity!
Subject, the while, to all the strife,
True love encounters in this life—
The wishes, hopes, he breathes in vain;
The chill, that turns his warmest sighs
To earthly vapour, ere they rise;
The doubt he feeds on, and the pain
That in his very sweetness lies.
Still worse, the' illusions that betray
His footsteps to their shining brink;
That tempt him, on his desert way
Through the bleak world, to bend and drink,

Where nothing meets his lips, alas,
But he again must sighing pass
On to that far-off home of peace,
In which alone his thirst will cease.

* * *

All this they bear, but, not the less,
Have moments rich in happiness—
Blest meetings, after many a day
Of widowhood past far away,
When the lov'd face again is seen
Close, close, with not a tear between—
Confidings frank, without control,
Pour'd mutually from soul to soul;
As free from any fear or doubt
As is that light from chill or stain,
The sun into the stars sheds out,
To be by them shed back again!—

That happy minglement of hearts,
Where, chang'd as chymic compounds are,
Each with its own existence parts,
To find a new one, happier far!
Such are their joys—and, crowning all,
That blessed hope of the bright hour,
When, happy and no more to fall,
Their spirits shall, with freshen'd power,
Rise up rewarded for their trust
In Him, from whom all goodness springs,
And, shaking off earth's soiling dust
From their emancipated wings,
Wander for ever through those skies
Of radiance, where Love never dies!

In what lone region of the earth
These Pilgrims now may roam or dwell,

God and the Angels, who look forth
To watch their steps, alone can tell.
But should we, in our wanderings,
Meet a young pair, whose beauty wants
But the adornment of bright wings,
To look like heaven's inhabitants—
Who shine where'er they tread, and yet
Are humble in their earthly lot,
As is the way-side violet,
That shines unseen, and were it not
For its sweet breath would be forgot—
Whose hearts, in every thought, are one,
Whose voices utter the same wills,
Answering, as Echo doth some tone
Of fairy music 'mong the hills,
So like itself, we seek in vain
Which is the echo, which the strain—

Whose piety is love, whose love,
Though close as 'twere their souls' embrace,
Is not of earth, but from above—
Like two fair mirrors, face to face,
Whose light, from one to the' other thrown,
Is heaven's reflection, not their own—
Should we e'er meet with aught so pure,
So perfect here, we may be sure,
There is but *one* such pair below,
And, as we bless them on their way
Through the world's wilderness, may say,
"There ZARAPH and his NAMA go."

NOTES.

NOTES.

PREFACE, p. xi.

An erroneous translation by the LXX. *of that verse in the sixth Chapter of Genesis, &c.*

THE error of these interpreters (and, it is said, of the old Italic version also,) was in making it οἱ Ἄγγελοι τοῦ Θεοῦ, "the *Angels* of God," instead of "the *Sons*" — a mistake, which, assisted by the allegorizing comments of Philo, and the rhapsodical fictions of the Book of Enoch *, was more than sufficient to affect the imaginations of such half-Pagan writers as Clemens Alexandrinus, Tertullian, and Lactantius, who, chiefly, among the Fathers, have indulged themselves in fan-

* It is lamentable to think that this absurd production, of which we now know the whole from Dr. Laurence's translation, should ever have been considered as an inspired or authentic work. — See the Preliminary Dissertation prefixed to the Translation.

ciful reveries upon the subject. The greater number, however, have rejected the fiction with indignation. Chrysostom, in his twenty-second Homily upon Genesis, earnestly exposes its absurdity *; and Cyril accounts such a supposition as εἴγνς μωρίας, "bordering on folly." † According to these Fathers (and their opinion has been followed by all the theologians, down from St. Thomas to Caryl and Lightfoot ‡,) the

* One of the arguments of Chrysostom is, that Angels are no where else, in the Old Testament, called "Sons of God,"—but his commentator, Montfaucon, shows that he is mistaken, and that in the Book of Job they are so designated, (c. 1. v. 6.) both in the original Hebrew and the Vulgate, though not in the Septuagint, which alone, he says, Chrysostom read.

† Lib. ii. Glaphyrorum. — Philæstrius, in his enumeration of heresies, classes this story of the Angels among the number, and says it deserves only to be ranked with those fictions about gods and goddesses, to which the fancy of the Pagan poets gave birth:—"Sicuti et Paganorum et Poetarum mendacia adserunt deos deasque transformatos nefanda conjugia commisisse."—De Hæres. Edit. Basil. p. 101.

‡ Lightfoot says "The sons of God, or the members of the Church, and the progeny of Seth, marrying carelessly and promiscuously with the daughters of men, or brood of Cain, &c." I find in Pole that, according to the Samaritan version, the phrase may be understood as meaning "the Sons of *the Judges*." — So variously may the Hebrew word, Elohim, be interpreted.

term " Sons of God," must be understood to mean the descendants of Seth, by Enos — a family peculiarly favoured by heaven, because with them, men first began " to call upon the name of the Lord" — while, by " the daughters of men," they suppose that the corrupt race of Cain is designated. The probability, however, is, that the words in question ought to have been translated " the sons of the " nobles or great men," as we find them interpreted in the Targum of Onkelos, (the most ancient and accurate of all the Chaldaic paraphrases,) and, as it appears from Cyril, the version of Symmachus also rendered them. This translation of the passage removes all difficulty, and at once relieves the Sacred History of an extravagance, which, however it may suit the imagination of the poet, is inconsistent with all our notions, both philosophical and religious.

Page 3.

Transmit each moment, night and day,
The echo of His luminous word!

Dionysius (De Cœlest. Hierarch.) is of opinion, that when Isaiah represents the Seraphim as crying out " one unto the other," his intention is to describe

those communications of the Divine thought and will, which are continually passing from the higher orders of the angels to the lower:— οἷα και αυτες τες θεοτατες Σεραφιμ οἱ θεολογοι φασιν ἑτερον προς τον ἑτερον κεκραγεναι, σαφως εν τετω, καθαπερ οιμαι, δηλεντες, ὁτι των θεολογικων γνωσεων οἱ πρωτοι τοις δευτεροις μεταδιδοασι.— See also, in the Paraphrase of Pachymer upon Dionysius, cap. 2. rather a striking passage, in which he represents all living creatures, as being, in a stronger or fainter degree, "echos of God."

Page 6.

One of earth's fairest woman-kind
Half veil'd from view, or rather shrin'd
In the clear crystal of a brook.

This is given upon the authority, or rather according to the fancy of some of the Fathers, who suppose that the women of earth were first seen by the angels in this situation; and St. Basil has even made it the serious foundation of rather a rigorous rule for the toilette of his fair disciples; adding, ἱκανον γαρ εστι παραγυμνεμενον καλλος και υἱες θεε προς ἡδονην γοητευσαι, και ὡς ανθρωπες διαταυτην αποθνησκοντας, θνητες αποδειξαι. — De Vera Virginitat. tom. i. p. 747. Edit. Paris. 1618.

Page 17.

Then first that juice of earth, &c. &c.

For all that relates to the nature and attributes of angels, the time of their creation; the extent of their knowledge, and the power which they possess, or can occasionally assume of performing such human functions as eating, drinking, &c. &c., I shall refer those who are inquisitive upon the subject to the following works:—The Treatise upon the Celestial Hierarchy, written under the name of Dionysius the Areopagite, in which, among much that is heavy and trifling, there are some sublime notions concerning the agency of these spiritual creatures—the Questions "de cognitione angelorum" of St. Thomas, where he examines most prolixly into such puzzling points as "whether angels illuminate each other," "whether they speak to each other," &c. &c.—The Thesaurus of Cocceius, containing extracts from almost every theologian that has written on the subject—the 9th, 10th and 11th chapters, sixth book, of "L'Histoire des Juifs," where all the extraordinary reveries of the Rabbins * about angels

* The following may serve as specimens:—"Les Anges ne sçavent point la langue Chaldaique; c'est pourquoi ils ne portent point à Dieu les oraisons de ceux qui prient dans

and dæmons are enumerated — the Questions attributed to St. Athanasius — the Treatise of Bonaventure upon the Wings of the Seraphim * — and, lastly, the ponderous folio of Suarez "de Angelis," where the reader will find all that has ever been fancied or reasoned, upon a subject which only *such* writers could have contrived to render so dull.

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cette langue. Ils se trompent souvent; ils ont des erreurs dangereuses: car l'Ange de la mort, qui est chargé de faire mourir un homme, en prend quelquefois un autre, ce qui cause de grands desordres. . . . . Ils sont chargés de chanter devant Dieu le Cantique, *Saint, Saint est le Dieu des armées;* mais ils ne remplissent cet office qu'une fois le jour, dans une semaine, dans un mois, dans un an, dans un siecle, ou dans l'éternité. L'Ange qui luttoit contre Jacob le pressa de le laisser aller, lorsque l'Aurore parut, parce que c'étoit son tour de chanter le Cantique ce jour la ce qu'il n'avoit encore jamais fait."

* This work (which, notwithstanding its title, is, probably, quite as dull as the rest) I have not, myself, been able to see, having searched for it in vain through the King's Library at Paris, though assisted by the zeal and kindness of M. Langlés and M. Vonpradt, whose liberal administration of that most liberal establishment, entitles them — not only for the immediate effect of such conduct, but for the useful and civilizing example it holds forth — to the most cordial gratitude of the whole literary world.

Page 12.

The Spirit of yon beauteous star.

It is the opinion of Kircher, Ricciolus, &c. (and was, I believe, to a certain degree, that of Origen) that the stars are moved and directed by intelligences or angels who preside over them. Among other passages from Scripture in support of this notion, they cite those words of the Book of Job, "When the morning stars sang together."—Upon which Kircher remarks, "Non de materialibus intelligitur." Itin. 1. Isagog. Astronom. See also Caryl's most wordy Commentary on the same text.

Page 14.

And the bright Watchers round the throne.

"The Watchers, the offspring of heaven."—Book of Enoch. In Daniel also the angels are called watchers:—"And behold, a watcher and an holy one came down from heaven." iv. 13.

Page 18.

Then first the fatal wine-cup rain'd, &c.

Some of the circumstances of this story were suggested to me by the Eastern legend of the two angels,

Harut and Marut, as it is given by Mariti, who says, that the author of the Taalim founds upon it the Mahometan prohibition of wine. The Bahardanush tells the story differently.

Page 19.

Why, why have hapless Angels eyes?

Tertullian imagines that the words of St. Paul, "Woman ought to have a veil on her head*, *on account of the angels*," have an evident reference to the fatal effects which the beauty of women once produced upon these spiritual beings. See the strange passage of this Father, (de Virgin. Velandis,) beginning "Si enim propter angelos, &c.," where his editor Pamelius endeavours to save his morality at the expense of his Latinity, by substituting the word "excussat" for "excusat." Such instances of indecorum, however, are but too common throughout the Fathers, in proof of which I need only refer to some passages in the same writer's treatise, "De Animâ," to the Second and Third Books of the Pædagogus of Clemens Alexandrinus, and to the instances which La Mothe le Vayer has adduced from Chrysostom in his Hexameron Rustique, Journée Seconde.

* 1 Corinth. xi. 10. Dr. Macknight's Translation.

Page 24.

When Lucifer, in falling, bore
The third of the bright stars away.

"And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth." Revelat. xii. 4.—"Docent sancti (says Suarez) supremum angelum traxisse secum tertiam partem stellarum." Lib. 7. cap. 7.

Page 25.

Rise, in earth's beauty, to repair
That loss of light and glory there!

The idea of the Fathers was that the vacancies, occasioned in the different orders of angels by the fall, were to be filled up from the human race. There is, however, another opinion, backed by Papal authority, that it was only the tenth order of the Celestial Hierarchy that fell, and that, therefore, the promotions which occasionally take place from earth are intended for the completion of that *grade* alone: or, as it is explained by Salonius (Dial. in Eccl.)—"Decem sunt ordines angelorum, sed unus cecidit per superbiam, et idcirco boni angeli semper laborant, ut de hominibus numerus adimpleatur, et proveniat ad perfectum nu-

merum, id est, denarium." According to some theologians, virgins alone are admitted "ad collegium angelorum;" but the author * of the "Speculum Peregrinarum Quæstionum" rather questions this exclusive privilege: — "Hoc non videtur verum, quia multi, non virgines, ut Petrus et Magdalena, multis etiam virginibus eminentiores sunt." Decad. 2. cap. 10.

Page 30.

'*Twas* RUBI.

I might have chosen perhaps some better name, but it is meant (like that of Zaraph in the following story) to define the particular class of spirits to which the angel belonged. The author of the Book of Enoch, who estimates at 200 the number of angels that descended upon Mount Hermon, for the purpose of making love to the women of earth, has favoured us with the names of their leader and chiefs — Samyaza, Urakabarameel, Akibeel, Tamiel, &c. &c.

In that heretical worship of angels, which prevailed, to a great degree, during the first ages of Christianity, to *name* them seems to have been one of the most important ceremonies; for we find it expressly forbidden

* F. Bartholomæus Sibylla.

in one of the Canons (35th) of the Council of Laodicea. ονομαζειν τους αγγελους. Josephus too mentions, among the religious rites of the Essenes, their swearing "to preserve the names of the angels,"—συντηρησειν τα των αγγελων ονοματα. Bell. Jud. lib. 2. cap. 8.—See upon this subject, Van Dale, de Orig. et Progress. Idololat. cap. 9.

Page 30.

.....*Those bright creatures, nam'd*
Spirits of Knowledge.

The word cherub signifies knowledge—το γνωστικον αυτων και θεοπτικον, says Dionysius. Hence it is that Ezekiel, to express the abundance of their knowledge, represents them as "full of eyes."

Page 33.

Summon'd his chief angelic powers
To witness, &c.

St. Augustin, upon Genesis, seems rather inclined to admit that the angels had some share ("aliquod ministerium") in the creation of Adam and Eve.

Page 43.

I had beheld their First, their EVE,
Born in that splendid Paradise.

Whether Eve was created *in* Paradise or not is a question that has been productive of much doubt and controversy among the theologians. With respect to Adam, it is agreed on all sides that *he* was created *outside;* and it is accordingly asked, with some warmth, by one of the commentators, "why should woman, the ignobler creature of the two, be created *within?*" * Others, on the contrary, consider this distinction as but a fair tribute to the superior beauty and purity of women, and some, in their zeal, even seem to think that, if the scene of her creation was not already Paradise, it became so, immediately upon that event, in compliment to her. Josephus is one of those, who think that Eve was formed outside; Tertullian, too, among the Fathers—and, among the Theologians, Rupertus, who, to do him justice, never misses an opportunity of putting on record his ill-will to the sex. Pererius, however, (and

* "Cur denique Evam, quæ Adamo ignobilior erat, formavit *intra* Paradisum?"

his opinion seems to be considered the most orthodox) thinks it much more consistent with the order of the Mosaic narration, as well as with the sentiments of Basil and other Fathers, to conclude that Eve was created *in* Paradise.

Page 43.

Her error, too.

The comparative extent of Eve's delinquency, and the proportion which it bears to that of Adam, is another point which has exercised the tiresome ingenuity of the Commentators; and they seem generally to agree (with the exception always of Rupertus) that, as she was not yet created when the prohibition was issued, and therefore could not have heard it, (a conclusion remarkably confirmed by the inaccurate way in which she reports it to the serpent*) her share in the crime of disobedience is considerably lighter than

* Rupertus considers these *variantes* as intentional and prevaricatory, and as the first instance upon record of a wilful vitiation of the words of God, for the purpose of suiting the corrupt views and propensities of human nature.—De Trinitat. lib. iii. cap. 5.

that of Adam.* In corroboration of this view of the matter, Pererius remarks that it is to Adam alone the Deity addresses his reproaches for having eaten of the forbidden tree, because to Adam alone the order had been originally promulgated. So far, indeed, does the gallantry of another commentator, Hugh de St. Victor, carry him, that he looks upon the words "I will put enmity between thee and the woman" as a proof that the sex was from that moment enlisted into the service of heaven, as the chief foe and obstacle which the spirit of Evil would have to contend with in his inroads on this world: — "si deinceps Eva inimica Diabolo, ergo fuit grata et amica Deo."

Page 45.

Call her — think what — his Life! his Life!

Chavah (or, as it is in the Latin version, Eva) has the same signification as the Greek, Zoe.

* Caietanus, indeed, pronounces it to be "minimum peccatum."

Epiphanius, among others, is not a little surprised at the application of such a name to Eve, so immediately too, after that awful denunciation of death, "dust thou art, &c. &c. * Some of the commentators think that it was meant as a sarcasm, and spoken by Adam, in the first bitterness of his heart, — in the same spirit of irony (says Pererius) as that of the Greeks in calling their Furies, Eumenides, or Gentle.† But the Bishop of Chalon, rejects this supposition: — "Explodendi sanè qui id nominis ab Adamo per ironiam inditum uxori suæ putant; atque quod mortis causa esset, amaro joco vitam appellasse."‡

With a similar feeling of spleen against women, some of these "distillateurs des Saintes Lettres (as Bayle calls them) in rendering the text "I will make him a help *meet for him*," translate these last words "*against* or *contrary* to him" (a meaning which, it ap-

* Και μετα το ακουσαι, γη ει και εις γην απελευση, μετα την παραβασιν. και την θαυμαστον ὁτι μετα την παραβασιν ταυτην την μεγαλην εσχεν επωνυμιαν. Hæres. 78. § 18. tom. i. edit. Paris, 1622.

† Lib. 6. p. 254.

‡ Pontus Tyard de recta nominum impositione, p. 14.

pears, the original will bear) and represent them as prophetic of those contradictions and perplexities, which men experience from women in this life.

It is rather strange that these two instances of perverse commentatorship should have escaped the researches of Bayle, in his curious article upon Eve. He would have found another subject of discussion, equally to his taste, in Gataker's whimsical dissertation upon Eve's knowledge of the τεχνη ὑφαντικη, and upon the notion of Epiphanius that it was taught her in a special revelation from heaven. — Miscellan. lib. ii. cap. 3. p. 200.

Page 57.

Oh idol of my dreams! whate'er
Thy nature be — human, divine,
Or but half heav'nly.

In an article upon the Fathers, which appeared, some years since, in the Edinburgh Review (No. 47.), and of which I have made some little use in these notes, (having that claim over it — as "quiddam notum *propriumque*" — which Lucretius gives to the cow over the calf,) there is the following remark: — "The belief of an intercourse between angels and women, founded upon a false version of a text

in Genesis, is one of those extravagant notions of St. Justin and other Fathers, which show how little they had yet purified themselves from the grossness of heathen mythology, and in how many respects their heaven was but Olympus, with other names. Yet we can hardly be angry with them for this one error, when we recollect that possibly to their enamoured angels we owe the fanciful world of sylphs and gnomes, and that at this moment we might have wanted Pope's most exquisite poem, if the version of the LXX. had translated the Book of Genesis correctly."

The following is one among many passages, which may be adduced from the Comte de Gabalis, in confirmation of this remark: — "Ces enfans du ciel engendrerent les géans fameux, s'etant fait aimer aux filles des hommes; et les mauvais cabalistes, Joseph et Philo (comme tous les Juifs sont ignorans), et après eux tous les auteurs que j'ai nommé tout à l'heure, ont dit que c'etoit des anges, et n'ont pas sçû que c'etoit les sylphes et les autres peuples des élémens, qui sous le nom d'enfans d'Eloim, sont distingués des enfans des hommes."—See Entret. Second.

Page 65.

So high she deem'd her Cherub's love!

" Nihil plus desiderare potuerint quæ angelos possidebant—magno scilicet nupserant." Tertull. de Habitu Mulieb. cap. 2.

Page 67.

Then first were diamonds caught, &c.

" Quelques gnomes désireux de devenir immortels, avoient voulu gagner les bonnes graces de nos filles, et leur avoient apporté des pierreries dont ils sont gardiens naturels : et ces auteurs ont crû, s'appuyans sur le livre d'Enoch mal-entendu, que c'etoient des piéges que les anges amoureux, &c. &c." Comte de Gabalis.

Tertullian traces all the chief luxuries of female attire, the neck-laces, armlets, rouge, and the black powder for the eye-lashes, to the researches of these fallen angels into the inmost recesses of nature, and the discoveries they were, in consequence, enabled to make, of all that could embellish the beauty of their earthly favourites. The passage is so remarkable that I shall give it entire:—" Nam et illi qui ea constituerant, damnati in pœnam mortis deputantur: illi scilicet

angeli, qui ad filias hominum de cœlo ruerunt, ut hæc quoque ignominia fœminæ accedat. Nam cùm et materias quasdam bene occultas et artes plerasque non benè revelatas, seculo multò magis imperito prodidissent (siquidem et metallorum opera nudaverant, et herbarum ingenia traduxerant et incantationum vires provulgaverant, et omnem curiositatem usque ad stellarum interpretationem designaverant) propriè et quasi peculiariter fœminis instrumentum istud muliebris gloriæ contulerunt: lumina lapillorum quibus monilia variantur, et circulos ex auro quibus brachia arctantur; et medicamenta ex fuco, quibus lanæ colorantur, et illum ipsum nigrum pulverem, quo oculorum exordia producuntur." De Habitu Mulieb. cap. 2.—See him also "De Cultu Fœm. cap. 10.

Page 67.

The mighty magnet, set
In woman's form.

The same figure, as applied to female attractions, occurs in a singular passage of St. Basil, of which the following is the conclusion: — Δια την ενουσαν κατα του αρρενος αυτης φυσικην δυναστειαν, ὡς σιδηρος, φημι, πορρωθεν μαγνητις, τουτο προς ἑαυτον μαγγανευι. . De Vera Vir-

ginitat. tom. i. p. 727. It is but fair, however, to add, that Hermant, the biographer of Basil, has pronounced this most unsanctified treatise to be spurious.

Page 68.

I've said, "Nay, look not there, my love," &c.

I am aware that this happy saying of Lord Albemarle's loses much of its grace and playfulness, by being put into the mouth of any but a human lover.

Page 71.

Note.

Clemens Alexandrinus is one of those who suppose that the knowledge of such sublime doctrines was derived from the disclosure of the angels. Stromat. lib. v. p. 48. To the same source Cassianus and others trace all impious and daring sciences, such as magic, alchemy, &c. "From the fallen angels (says Zosimus) came all that miserable knowledge which is of no use to the soul."—Παντα τα πονηρα και μηδεν ωφελουντα την ψυχην. Ap. Photium.

Page 71.

That light
Escaping from the Zodiac's signs.

" La lumière Zodiacale n'est autre chose que l'atmosphere du soleil."—Lalande.

Page 103.

As 'tis grav'd
Upon the tablets that, of old,
By Cham were from the Deluge sav'd.

The pillars of Seth are usually referred to as the depositaries of ante-diluvian knowledge; but they were inscribed with none but astronomical secrets. I have, therefore, preferred here the tablets of Cham, as being, at least, more miscellaneous in their information. The following account of them is given in Jablonski from Cassianus :— " Quantum enim antiquæ traditiones ferunt Cham filius Noæ, qui superstitionibus ac profanis fuerit artibus institutus, sciens nullum se posse superbis memorialem librum in arcam inferre, in quam erat ingressurus, sacrilegas artes ac profana commenta durissimis insculpsit lapidibus."

Page 103.

And this young angel's 'mong the rest.

Pachymer, in his Paraphrase on the Book de Divinis Nominibus of Dionysius, speaking of the incarnation of Christ, says, that it was a mystery ineffable from all time, and "unknown even to the first and *oldest* angel," — justifying this last phrase by the authority of St. John in the Revelation.

Page 104.

Circles of light that, from the same
Eternal centre sweeping wide,
Carry its beams on every side.

See the 13th chapter of Dionysius for his notions of the manner in which God's ray is communicated, first to the Intelligences near him, and then to those more remote, gradually losing its own brightness as it passes into a denser medium. — προσβαλλεσα δε ταις παχυτεραις ὑλαις, αμυδροτεραν ἐχει την διαδοτικην επιφανειαν.

Page 113.

Then first did woman's virgin brow
That hymeneal chaplet wear,
Which when it dies, no second vow
Can bid a new one bloom out there.

In the Catholic church, when a widow is married, she is not, I believe, allowed to wear flowers on her head. The ancient Romans, honoured with a "corona pudicitiæ," or crown of modesty, those who entered but once into the marriage state.

Page 115.

Her, who near
The Tabernacle stole to hear
The secrets of the Angel.

Sara.

Page 117.

Two fallen Splendors.

The Sephiroths are the higher orders of emanative being, in the strange and incomprehensible system of the Jewish Cabbala. They are called by various names, Pity, Beauty, &c. &c.; and their influences are supposed to act through certain canals,

which communicate with each other. The reader may judge of the rationality of the system by the following explanation of part of the machinery: — "Les canaux qui sortent de la Miséricorde et de la Force, et qui vont aboutir à la Beauté, sont chargés d'un grand nombre d'Anges. Il y en a trente-cinq sur le canal de la Miséricorde; qui recompensent et qui couronnent la vertu des Saints, &c. &c." — For a concise account of the Cabalistic Philosophy, see Enfield's very useful compendium of Brucker.

Page 117.

From that tree
Which buds with such eternally.

" On les représente quelquefois sous la figure d'un arbre . . . . l'Ensoph qu'on met au-dessus de l'arbre Sephirotique ou des Splendeurs divins, est l'Infini." — L'Histoire des Juifs, liv, ix. 11.

THE END.

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